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Home • Garden • Style • Fun • Food • Happenings



Things Are Going
Swimmingly At

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Swim Club** p12

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about the cover



The cover was shot on location at Southampton Racquet & Swim Club in Gastonia, see related story page 12. Pictured is Jon Delle Isle, pool manager and diver extraordinaire. Cover photo by Rick Haithcox, cover graphic design by David James.

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Catching Up With Taylor and Elke, Owners Of **Southampton Racquet & Swim Club**

By David Hamrick



Taylor & Elke Smith,
Club Owners

GA!: Taylor, it's been a year since you were featured in Gaston Alive! The club and grounds look better than ever!

Taylor: It is great to hear from you and thank you for the kind words. It seems our two years of hard work are starting to really pay off. The overall atmosphere and ambiance of the club is really coming together. We've worked on a lot, from landscaping, court work, pool upgrades and clubhouse renovations and we're just about done with most of the major changes. Our goal has always been to become an upscale and boutique style club with an exclusive feel, and we're well on our way to reaching that. With the majority of

renovations behind us we can now switch gears to fine tuning the programs and offering the best in classes, clinics and events for both the tennis and swim sides of the business.

GA!: What's new and exciting?

Taylor: That would have to be our recently renovated and redesigned fitness center. With a full array of state of the art equipment, a very mellow and small user base, this private little gym is a nice bonus or perk to members when joining the overall club.

GA!: Tell me about the swim program, and are memberships still available?

Taylor: Absolutely. Just like the gym, its amazing how many people we come across that don't know we have a pool, let alone a Jr. Olympic size pool with any entire swim program built around it. From Memorial Day to Labor Day the pool area becomes center of attention and hosts a swim team, DJ parties, swim lessons, water aerobics, even scuba lessons and so much more. But it is the social atmosphere that children get when coming



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to a private club pool that really sets it apart. Let the kids have fun in the sun with all their friends while you sit back with a cold beverage and or book and enjoy the good life. It's what it is all about here at Southampton and what we spend the rest of the year waiting for.

GA! When does the pool open?

Taylor: We kick off the season Memorial Day Weekend with a big DJ Party! It couldn't come soon enough...

GA!: I know your tennis program is absolutely rocking...

Taylor: Without a doubt. If you're a serious tennis player in the area, you already know Southampton is the place to be and our USTA teams are a perfect example. The program is unbelievably strong with several state championship teams, and our 6.5 women's team went all the way to become Sectional Champs, meaning they are not only the #1 team in the Charlotte Metro area, not only in NC, but in all of the Southeast! An amazing feat, and hats off to an exemplary season. But it's not just the advanced players that get all the fun. The novice players and junior programs are really kicking into gear. We recently expanded our coaching staff to fill the demand. For those out there looking to join the tennis side of the club we only have a few open memberships remaining so don't wait until it's too late.



GA!: What do you guys do when you are not running the club?

Taylor: Ha, not much, the club is all consuming so we don't really have a life beyond the club. But to tell you the truth, if we weren't running the club we'd be members and spending all of our time here anyway. When you get the chance to do something you love, it's like you're not working at all.



GA!: How do most members hear about the club?

Taylor: Well your articles definitely help, and we appreciate them! But word of mouth and referrals from current club members are the most common ways. We really are one of the best kept secrets in the area being off the main roads and beaten path so to speak.

GA!: So how does one go about joining the Southampton Racquet and Swim Club?

Taylor: For those interested the first place to start would be to visit our website at www.southamptonclub.com to gather further information. The next step would be to call and set up and appointment/interview where we provide a private tour of the grounds and show you all that the club has to offer. Application time usually takes no more than a day or two and then you'll be signed up, that's it!



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by Ben Dungan

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These seems to be a day for everything these days. There is a day that helps us mourn the loss of socks gone by (Lost Sock Memorial Day, May 8), a day to toss out your old fruitcakes (Fruitcake Toss Day, Jan. 3), and even a day where we can celebrate talking like a pirate (Talk Like A Pirate Day, Sept. 19).

So there shouldn't be any surprise that the record store has a day of its own too.

RECORD STORE DAY™

APRIL 21, 2012

Record Store Day started over five years when a group of independent record store folks got together in effort to increase the awareness of the record store. At that time, many of the major record store retailers were closing down. And as a result, the media was declaring the end of the record store as we know it.

And while it's true that the big chains have gone out of business, there are still plenty of independent record stores that are still open for business. There may not be as many brick-and-mortar record stores as there was fifteen years ago before Napster came along and changed the game, but there are still places that music lovers can go and purchase music.

It's 2012 now, and the musical landscape has changed. But there is no question that people's interest in music is still very much alive. It's just the medium that has changed. But for those of us who grew up with record stores, the iTunes store just doesn't quite have the same effect.

For me, a trip to a record store was a special experience. One step into the store, and it was almost sensory overload. The sounds, the smells, the sights - it's hard to explain. It's almost as if you had to be there.

But you can still be there by going to the fifth annual Record Store Day on Saturday, April 21.

When organizers rolled out this idea in 2008, approximately 200 independent record stores participated. This year, organizers expect anywhere between 800 - 1000 stores will take part in the day.

However, don't let the name Record Store Day fool you. It's not a day that just celebrates the vinyl

record. It's a day that celebrates music and the music lover, and everything else in between.

In an effort to make the event special, record labels are offering special product that can be purchased only at participating stores on this day. A lot of this does skew towards the vinyl end of things. But don't let that stop you.

Record Store Day is your chance to take in the sights and sounds. It's a chance to buy that new artist you have hearing about or perhaps buy that classic album you lost along the way. It's a day that says it's OK to feel a little nostalgic.

You can even make it special event by taking the kids or the grandkids. This time, Instead of telling them about the olden days, you can simply show them.

Here is a list of participating stores within a 40 mile radius of Gaston County:

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COOKING



Caprese Salad Cocktail

I know we have talked about Caprese Salad before, but I wanted to present this variation that has become very popular around my house. It's easy and presents very well. The flavors meld in the salad and it offers options on how it can be used.

The ingredients remain the same in general but there are some variations.

Cherry Tomatoes

Mozzarella balls (about 1" in diameter usually prepared in olive oil)

Fresh Basil Leaves

Olive Oil (you can use the oil from the Mozzarella balls if they come that way)

Balsamic Vinegar (preferably aged or infused)

Salt & Pepper

I rinse the cherry tomatoes and cut them in half. The Mozzarella I use is already in one inch balls so I just cut them in half. You could use other 'mutz' and cut it down. The basil I cut chiffonade, which is a preparation method that literally means 'made of rags'. The technique is to stack the basil leaves then roll and cut across the vein of the leaf in one eighth inch thick strips. With the basil chiffonade the thin strips mix well with the other ingredients to create a nice melding of flavors.

Since you can make the recipe for one or a dozen I won't give measurements but more ratios, assume one quarter cup of tomatoes and an equal amount of mozzarella with 2-3 basil leaves (depending on size) with one half teaspoon each of oil and balsamic per person served as a side dish. Increase if the Caprese is playing a more prominently featured role.

This is a light, bright salad that is a hit especially at outdoor parties-and easy to prepare ahead. Enjoy!

*Ciao,
Glenn and Glenn*

WITH THE
GLENN'S

A close-up photograph of a glass bowl filled with a Caprese salad. The salad consists of several thick slices of bright red cherry tomatoes, chunks of white mozzarella cheese with golden-brown seared edges, and fresh green basil leaves. The ingredients are arranged in a rustic, overlapping fashion. A large, single basil leaf is prominently placed at the top left of the bowl. The background is dark and out of focus.

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Nan Bridgeman is the owner of Blythe Gallery in downtown Belmont. Blythe Gallery specializes in home furnishings, interior design, and gifts.

p: 704.825.8809

The Home Stylist

By Nan Bridgeman

It's Porch Weather!

In the South, we love our porches, our verandahs and our piazzas! These shaded outdoor rooms were necessary before air conditioning, and offered a cool place to sit and visit with friends, rock a fretting baby or sit and snap beans while enjoying a cool breeze. I have fond memories of visiting my grandmother's home in South Carolina with its large wrap-a-round porch outfitted with white rockers and adorned with large ferns. It was a great place to congregate, with adults sitting and talking, children playing chase on the lawn, and later taking turns cranking the churn of peach custard ice cream. Here are some simple spring rituals that were passed down in our family to have our porches ready for warm weather, relaxing and entertaining.

1. Spring Cleaning!

Mid April is a good time to wash away the remaining pollen that greets us every spring. I use a large bucket of warm water with mild detergent and a very small splash of bleach to wash floors and metal furniture, and then rinse well. It is also a great time to sand away any hints of rust and then touch up paint. White has always been a classic porch color but "Charleston green" and "cottage black" are also excellent, versatile colors.



Also, if it is time to repaint your porch, you might consider painting your porch ceiling “sky blue”. This is an old trick to keep wasps and bees from nesting on your ceiling.

2. Assess your furniture needs.

Porch furniture should be comfortable and able to withstand moisture. Wicker and metal have long been ideal choices for outdoor use but there are new plastic pieces that resemble wicker that also work well. Rockers are usually the first seats to be taken so consider having one or two on your porch. Chinese garden stools have become very popular again offering extra pull up seating or a space to rest a drink. If space allows, a dining table is a great addition for dining alfresco or a spot to cut watermelon and serve children without worries of drips on the carpet.

3. Add some fresh accents.

- ◆ Accents are a great way to freshen up and give personality to your outdoor room.
- ◆ You might think about adding one or two of these accents to your porch.
- ◆ A rug feels good to bare feet and anchors the sitting area. While we love natural fibers, the newer rugs that appear natural woven but can be washed with a spray hose are very practical. You can also have an artist paint a “rug” on your wooden porch floor to give interest.
- ◆ Toss out some throw pillows in cool colors made of indoor/outdoor fabric that resists fading and mildew. Throw pillows are an inexpensive way to freshen up any room.
- ◆ Lighting is a nice addition. Hurricane globes offer soft candle light, lanterns and iron chandeliers fitted with candles are popular. Also, there are some great new lamps on the market made for outdoor use.



Handcrafted Chippendale style bench painted cottage black. This pattern was faithfully copied from a Charleston bench by a master craftsman and can be ordered at Blythe Gallery with your choice of paint color.)

4. Make your space a garden room.

Ferns and palms add a sense of coolness to the porch and also visually soften the hard surfaces of the porch. Begonia are a great shade plant that add touches of color.

Wind chimes, gurgling water from a nearby fountain are delights to the ear as are the hum of crickets in the evening. A gardenia or jasmine vine planted near the porch offers great seasonal smells that make us enjoy our garden room.

Now is the perfect time to extend your living area to the outdoors. Enjoy planning your space and take time to enjoy nature.

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This silverplate pendant showcases a copy of a vintage map of Gaston County found in a 1932 encyclopedia. Is your hometown included under the glass of this pendant? The map is adhered with a special gloss, then sealed with glass to magnify and enhance the colors and printing. A silver colored 2mm ball chain finishes the nostalgic look of this 1 inch pendant. Handmade by a Gaston County Artist.



Map Pendant \$22



Sundrop Glass Pendant

Carry a bit of Gaston County with you with this fun pendant created exclusively for Gaston Alive! magazine. Kiln fired glass from upcycled Sundrop bottles, these pendants are each one

of a kind, handmade by a Gaston County Artist. The back of the pendant features a textured surface which magnifies through the front of the smooth round green glass. Approximately 1.5 inches in diameter, the pendant is finished with sterling silver wire and hung on a silver colored 2 mm, 24 inch ball chain.

Sundrop Pendant \$28

Vintage Silver Spoon Bracelet

This elegant handmade spoon bracelet is created from two vintage silverplate spoons. The 1954 pattern is called "Jubilee" and features a lovely floral design to grace your wrist. Very old spoons are upcycled into a beautiful new piece of jewelry with a history. Created just for Gaston Alive! magazine, by Gaston County Artists.

**1954 Jubilee Spoon
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—Tom Silva, This Old House



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	DINNER	D	BEER/WINE	↑	\$	\$21 AND UP
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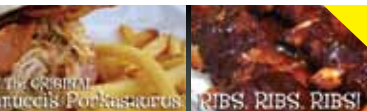


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